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News and Views from the Farm Management Staff

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE
Division of Agricultural Economics Programs
Washington 25, D. C.



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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Dear Farm Management Extension Workers:

Washington State Studying the Possibilities of Electronic Record Project

Homer Fletcher, farm management specialist, Washington State University, was in Washington, D. C., on March 20-22 in connection with a special assignment given him by his director. This assignment is to make an analysis of the possibilities and effort involved for the development and implementation in the State of Washington of a mail-in farm record project using electronic data processing. Homer is giving full-time attention to this study. There has been a rapid growth of interest on the part of farmers in Washington State in possibilities of a record project of this nature which would facilitate farm business analysis.

Homer was interested in obtaining first-hand observation of current operating projects and their role in the overall farm management program. In addition to discussions with various persons here in the USDA, Homer made visits to Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. The latter was in connection with ELFAC, the northeast regional project. Homer also visited with the Farm Foundation in Chicago.

The Washington State people are particularly interested in examining the possibilities of getting at least a test project in operation for the calendar year of 1964. It seems significant that Washington State has decided to study this facet of farm management work.

Southern Workshop

The Southern Extension Committee on Farm Management and Economic Adjustment is planning a workshop in lieu of its fall meeting. The workshop is for all extension farm management specialists in the region, who number nearly 60. It is to be held in Memphis, October 8-10.

Topics are to include: Clientele of future farm management work and their major problems, basic educational techniques, "Who should teach what to whom?", tools and methodology, and responsibility of the farm management specialist in a changing educational program.

The subcommittee to work out the agenda is to meet in Atlanta, May 24. It is composed of Stephen Q. Allen, Kentucky; Sidney C. Bell, Alabama; R. James Hildreth, Farm Foundation; Rupert B. Johnston, Mississippi; Harold Walker, Virginia; and E. P. Callahan, FES. The subcommittee will appreciate your suggestions.

Newsletters as an Educational Tool

Last month we indicated that we had decided to use this newsletter medium to communicate with you more frequently. We hope it will contribute more to our mutual objectives. We know that many of you are participating in various ways in the farm management and other newsletters issued in your State. The most appropriate and productive way in which the newsletter method may be used seems to vary by State situations. However, this channel of communicating farm management information is being used effectively in several instances.

In this regard we would like to call your attention to the article in the February issue of the Extension Service Review, entitled "Newsletters Pay," on page 33. In this article Ralph Parks, California agricultural engineer, gives some interesting comments on the use of newsletters.

Management Work in Regard to Farmer Participation in Government Programs

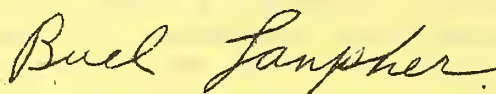
We know that many of you have been involved in educational work pertaining to the 1963 Feed Grain Program in recent months. Also, the contacts that we have had in recent weeks with some of you indicate that you are already or will soon be involved in educational work pertaining to the coming Wheat Referendum. As we have indicated in connection with past Government programs, we feel that they provide an excellent situation for teaching farmers some important economic concepts and developing budgeting skills. We appreciate receiving the copies of materials that you have been using in extension educational programs in this regard. We hope you will remember to continue sending us copies of budgets and other materials which you are using or plan to use, and also any comments on your experiences in using such materials. We have particular need for information about educational activities and materials you develop in connection with the Wheat Referendum.

You may be especially interested in the article entitled "Government Feed Grain Programs and Price Support Activity" in the Feed Situation to be released on April 10.

A Vacancy

We have been advised by the International Cotton Advisory Committee that its economist position is vacant. Salary will be approximately equivalent to GS-14 or GS-15, depending on qualifications. A more detailed announcement is in your dean's office or can be obtained by writing to the Executive Secretary, International Cotton Advisory Committee, South Agriculture Building, Washington 25, D. C.

Very truly yours,



Buel Lanpher
E. P. Callahan
Glen J. Vollmar
L. M. Vaughan